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THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

14 JAN 1969

The Honorable Nicholas deB. Katzenbach
Under Secretary of State
Washington, D. C. 20520

Dear Nick:

I have reviewed the proposals in your letter of December 16th concerning our facilities at Kagnew and agree that any proposed new functions or new construction there should be referred to our respective successors for their review and approval, as you and I have done.

As I mentioned in my letter of September 6th, we have undertaken specific studies of ways in which we might be able to reduce our personnel and acreage requirements at Kagnew without seriously degrading our communications [REDACTED] capabilities.

[REDACTED] This plan should be completed in September 1969.

--The Joint Chiefs of Staff are studying ways, including the use of satellites, to consolidate Army (STRATCOM) and Navy communications functions at Kagnew, thereby reducing the amount of acreage required for communications purposes. This study should be completed in March 1969.

--The Secretary of the Army is surveying manpower needs to determine the minimum number of support personnel required at Kagnew. This report also will be submitted in March.

There are certain facilities at Kagnew which we should retain as long as possible unless there is some technological break-through which would permit our giving them up. As noted in the preliminary studies which we provided to you earlier, possible alternative locations not only are less satisfactory from a technical point of view -- particularly in the case of [REDACTED] activities -- but they also appear to offer no appreciably better political prospects for tenure. It would be a useful next step if the State Department would do a political analysis with respect to each of the alternative locations identified in the preliminary studies. Our contingency planning then can take into account the political or other price that we might be expected to pay in relocating all or some of the Kagnew facilities and the degree of certainty or risk involved in retaining the relocated facilities over a period of years.

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We will provide your staff with the results of our studies when completed. With this information and the political analysis which I have suggested, our Departments will be in a position to weigh the technical feasibility and political reliability of available alternative locations. They then can see whether the alternatives offer sufficient promise to warrant relocation of some or all of Kagnev's function.

The decisions which will be made as a result of these studies and the political analysis will be of great importance. Rather than our agreeing now on an annual progress report, I suggest that we leave our respective successors to develop the timing and form of reports which will best fit their needs.

Sincerely,

Paul

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